NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD

FENCE

(Feet)

CODE 382

DEFINITION

A constructed barrier to livestock, wildlife or people.

PURPOSES

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to facilitate the application of conservation practices that treat the soil, water, air, plant, animal, and human resource concerns. Applicable purposes include, but are not limited to:

- improve livestock grazing potential
- reduce erosion and improve water quality
- facilitate livestock husbandry and grazing management
- protect newly planted areas
- facilitate wildlife management
- control human and vehicle access to restricted or hazardous areas

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

This practice may be applied on any area where access management is needed. Fences are not needed where natural barriers will serve the purpose.

CRITERIA

General Criteria Applicable to All Purposes

Fencing materials, type and design of fence installed shall be of a high quality and durability, and the construction performed to meet the intended management objectives and is best suited for the topography of the landscape. The type and design of fence installed will meet the objective.

Fences shall be positioned to facilitate management requirements and follow all Federal, State and local laws.

Height, size, spacing, and type of posts will be used that best provides the needs for the style of fence required and is best suited for the topography of the landscape.

All power fences must be grounded for proper functioning and to protect humans, animals, wildlife, and power fence equipment from lightning.

Compliance with all applicable Federal, State, and local laws and regulations, including permits, permissions, or notifications is required.

Cultural resources will be considered when planning this practice. This practice has the potential for adversely affecting cultural resources and compliance with GM 420, Part 401, during the planning process is necessary.

Where appropriate, local cultural values will be incorporated into practice design in a technically sound manner.

CONSIDERATIONS

A variety of fence designs is available to fit the purpose and site characteristics. The design should consider: topography, soil type or ecological site, kinds and habits of livestock and wildlife, location and adequacy of water facilities, proportioning forage among grazing units, development of potential grazing systems, human access, landscape aesthetics, erosion problems, and expected life of fence.

Straighter fences reduce cost, but may accelerate erosion from livestock trailing on steeper slopes.

Fences across gullies, canyons, or streams may require special bracing and designs, such as breakaway or swinging watergaps to accommodate heavy seasonal runoff and flash flooding, and floating fences across water.

Fences should have easy access for construction and maintenance. Power fences require access to a dependable power supply, such as main power line, solar power panel, or easily exchanged batteries.

Heavy vegetation and areas of potential blow-down are obstacles to fence installation and maintenance.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Plans and specifications are to be prepared for specific sites based on this standard and the ND-NRCS Fence Specification.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Regular inspection of fences should be part of an on-going maintenance program. Inspection of fences after storm events is needed to facilitate the functionality of the fence.

Maintenance and repairs will be performed as needed. Precautions should be taken to ensure the safety of construction and maintenance crews.

Where applicable, cleared rights-of-way will be established to facilitate fence construction and maintenance.